



WisDOT/City of Green Bay Meeting
Friday, May 21, 2004 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

People in attendance

Rob Strong, Green Bay Director of Planning

Carl Weber, Green Bay Director of Public Works

Bill Lockery, Green Bay Principal Planner

Chris Pirlot, Green Bay Traffic Engineer

Ed Wiesner, Green Bay, Director of Engineering, Public Works

Chris Culotta, WisDOT District 3

Doug Dalton, WisDOT BOP

Mandy Ewing, WisDOT BOP

Casey Newman, WisDOT BOP

Jonquil Johnston, WisDOT BOP

1. Overview of WisDOT's meeting purpose and WisDOT's long-range plan, *Connections 2030*, by WisDOT staff: The meeting began at 10:05 with introductions. Casey Newman, WisDOT, gave an overview of WisDOT's long-range plan *Connections 2030*. WisDOT is seeking input on transportation planning issues from larger Wisconsin cities at this point. *Connections 2030* is scheduled to be completed in 2006.
2. Gathering of input from City of Green Bay: Staff from the City of Green Bay answered the following questions and gave WisDOT a copy of Green Bay's *Smart Growth 2022* comprehensive plan, which was funded in part by a transportation element grant in 2000. Green Bay staff also distributed several maps relating to transportation, growth, and land use.
 - a. Current transportation and development issues in Green Bay.

The Green Bay Comprehensive Plan calls for redevelopment, mode accessibility, and management and preservation of the existing transportation system. The City believes a spoke system into the city is important to the health of near-side neighborhoods and the downtown. Green Bay's goals are to enhance or redevelop the existing infrastructure to support the downtown and near-side neighborhoods. The staff would like to balance roadway expansion and traffic flow with traffic calming measures in residential areas and bicycle and pedestrian access. City staff noted the transportation system can only be built to a certain level to accommodate capacity and that eventually education of system users and enforcement is needed to provide efficiency and safety.

Along State Hwy 57, there are pedestrian cross-traffic issues. Two pedestrian overpasses have been considered in the city limits. State Hwy 57 also presents connection concerns from Church Road to the Brown County line. The Town of Scott is proposing to close parts of Church Road, a major connector street within the corridor, in order to give Hwy 57 priority. The City does not want to see this happen as it provides sole access to some areas. Green Bay staff stated there is a lack of connecting roads within the Town of Scott.

Currently, transit service does not go east of I-43 and the bus system has experienced low volumes.

There are several local streets between the Port of Green Bay and STP designated roads that are considered “orphan” roads. These streets (South Broadway Street, Hurlbut Street, Atkinson Drive, Military Avenue, Prairie Avenue) experience heavy truck traffic due to local commerce at the port. They need street work done, but are not eligible for STP funds. There is a major rail switch yard off Broadway and the rail road asked the City to consider closing Broadway. The City received a grant to identify an intermodal freight district.

b. Future growth issues and related transportation needs.

Redevelopment: The downtown economy is transitioning from regional retail to office, educational, and other uses. Specifically, transportation improvements to Monroe, Velp/141, and Washington Street parallel to the Fox River would foster redevelopment efforts, such as the Nicolet Bank Building, Younkers site, and the Fox Parking Ramp footprint. As the downtown and near-side neighborhoods redevelop, there will be an increased need for transit access. The City of Green Bay would like to see park and ride options, increased frequency, and express/commuter service to and from the outer limits to downtown. In addition, planners would like to draw on the history and uniqueness of Green Bay as an older community in order to maintain and attract new businesses and residents. The City would like to create a human-scale downtown environment that promotes walking and minimizes street size. As such, planners are interested in promoting access routes to the downtown that provide travelers with a sense that they are leaving the highway and entering a community. They envision attractive tree-lined boulevards that move traffic freely, but at a speed appropriate for residential areas. They do not want a freeway to run into the downtown.

Greenfield development: In terms of new development areas, Green Bay can expand on the east side. Growth on the west side of the City is limited. Green Bay staff noted the northeast side of the city is experiencing development. Recently, 1,100 acres were annexed near the State Hwy 54 and State Hwy 57 interchange from the adjoining Town of Scott, with whom the City of Green Bay has a boundary agreement and engages in joint planning. Green Bay staff expects the 1,100 acres to be a major growth area, with infrastructure lay-out anticipated to begin this summer. The City recognizes extension of Green Bay’s existing transportation grid system to and within the northeast development would be beneficial to traffic flow.

Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission (RPC) is conducting a corridor study along State Hwy 57 to Door County. Brown County and the towns of Scott, Red River, and Brussels are participating in planning studies along this corridor, as well. The RPC is looking at whether State Hwy 57 should be a limited access freeway becoming an expressway in Door County. Bay-Lake RPC also completed a corridor plan for I-43.

By-passes constructed in outlying communities accommodate regional commutes, creating more congestion and development pressure. State Hwy 57 serves as a north-south route. The City would like to see a corridor on the east side of the Fox River instead of pushing people onto bridges to cross it. A parallel route is needed east of the Fox River to funnel drivers away from the US Hwy 41 corridor. The City would like to see Hwy 57 connected to CTH CE.

Public Transit: Expansive land use patterns, plentiful free parking, and half-hour headways have reduced the ability of public transit to provide viable and cost effective service. The volume has not been large enough to justify a park and ride system for either local or regional commuters, although the City would like to consider one in the future. Green Bay Metro provides transit and paratransit service. The City of Green Bay plans to coordinate future route assessment and design in conjunction with their redevelopment efforts. A regional park and ride has some feasibility because of regional commuting between Green Bay and the Fox Cities and cities such as Luxemburg, Oconto, and Algoma.

The Midwest Regional Rail System calls for five new trips between Green Bay and Milwaukee. The Green Bay comprehensive plan calls for working with WisDOT, Amtrak, and other agencies to bring passenger rail service to Green Bay. Intercity bus might provide a more cost effective and flexible means of intercity travel than passenger rail. The City of Green Bay would like to see more rails-to-trails efforts.

There is future potential for increased intermodal freight traffic through the Port of Green Bay. The port has a strategic plan that calls for dredging which would deepen the Bay and allow for more and bigger freight to pass through. The seaway might also be widened to accommodate bigger ships. Increases in intermodal freight traffic makes connections between I-43, rail, and the port more critical.

c. What transportation issues are most significant/important to Green Bay? Why?

- Maintenance/preservation of existing transportation infrastructure to accommodate redevelopment of the downtown and near-side neighborhoods.
- Mode options/accessibility, particularly pedestrian/bicycle.
- Connections along the Interstate (I-43), freeways (172, 141, 41), and arterials (57, 54, Velp Avenue, Shawano Avenue).
- Design standards flexibility, particularly with regard to lane widths in low speed urban areas.
- Continuation of federal/state funding programs.
- Understanding that urban centers are valuable to the state economy.

d. What issues should WisDOT be working on that would benefit Green Bay? Why?

- Maintenance/preservation of existing transportation infrastructure to accommodate redevelopment of the downtown and near-side neighborhoods.
- Urban standard design flexibility (Shawano Avenue) to accommodate redevelopment efforts and cost considerations (traffic calming measures, city snow removal budget, lane width).
- Transportation enhancements: streetscaping/aesthetics to accommodate pedestrian/bicycle access and redevelopment efforts.
- Access management and land use controls, particularly near interchanges. Intersections and interchanges attract development that competes with the existing urban center. In addition, there should be recognition of different access control issues and needs between urban and rural areas. What is the future of Trans 2033?

e. What plans/planning documents are in place now?

- City of Green Bay Smart Growth 2022 (comprehensive plan).
- Downtown Hospital Traffic Study.
- Brown County comprehensive plan (anticipated adoption fall 2004).
- Bay-Lakes Regional Comprehensive Plan (anticipated completion fall 2005).
- MPO (Brown County Planning Commission) plans.
- Others?